



Especial Newsletter No. 1
The Quota Process and Impact
Research
2011 – 2012 Summary of Findings



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IDRC, we extend our gratefulness



Research is titled:

The Introduction of the Quota System in Sudan and its Impact in Enhancing Women's Political Engagement

The Regional Institute for Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights at Ahafd University for Women.



Research Duration: Two Years (March 2011- September 2012)

Team Members:

A team Leader (female), 4 researchers (three females and a male, one also acts as a project coordinator (Prof. Balghis Badri, Dr. Samia El-Hadi El Nagar, Dr. Omeima Sheikh-Eldeen, Dr. Ahmed Gamal-Eldeen).



Research Assistants/Data Collector:

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Advisors (Prof. Atta El-Battahani, and Samia El-Hadi El-Nagar).



Research in Brief:

Our research concerns with women political participation in Sudan, with special emphasis on young females. It delineates the factors that positively or negatively affect women political participation and explores the process of the introduction of the quota system in Sudan in 2008 Electoral Law and its impact on enhancing women engagement in politics in the 2010 elections and within political parties.

Research Goal

To provide a better and holistic understanding of women political participation in Sudan and the factors that affect it; with the view to



Enhance the engagement of women, especially the youth, in politics and public life.

Research Specific Objectives

Specific objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To analyze the overall context and factors that influence women's political participation.
2. To understand the interface between the contexts that produced the quota and the effect the quota had in increasing the inclusion and engagement of women in politics. Empowerment of women /female youth within the party. affect their engagement in politics.
3. To examine the degree to which the internal application of various political parties for the quota system has enhanced the effective participation and empowerment of women/female youth within the party.
4. To delineate young female motives for participation and factors that positively or negatively affect their engagement in politics.

Two Phases

- First year: largely on context, quota process and political parties experiences in implementing the quota and factors affecting women political engagement.
- Second year: youth motives for political engagement

Methodologies and Methods:

We used qualitative methods and methodology to collect and analyze data. In particular in the research methods used are structured and semi-

- Structured interviews
- Focused group discussions (FGDs),
- Use of gender mainstreaming check list for political parties
- Workshops for both data analysis and dissemination participatory.



We conducted the following interviews:

1.1 15 interviews with Individuals that had a role on the individual level in the experience of the quota, both males and females with different disciplines, like women activists, academics and actors in the civil society organizations and political parties, women in the media and pioneers in the women movement.

- 18 interviews with women from the government and parliament as well as two interviews with the Deputy of the Electoral Commission and the head of the Council of States. All of the interviewed people were members of the committees involved in drafting the election law. The interviews with the government included the Federal Ministry of Social Welfare (the state and federal ministries). These institutions are responsible of the strengthening of the role of Sudanese women as well as issuing the National Strategy for the empowerment of women. The research members also conducted interviews with the representative of the Ministry of Justice; the parliamentarians women at the national parliament and the Legislative Council of Khartoum State.
- 9 interviews with academician, researchers and other individuals related to the issue of quota, from different universities, cultural centers and related institutions.
- 10 interviews with International NGOs, embassies, donors and other institutions that were strongly involved in the process of the quota system in Sudan.
- Conducted in-depth interviews with 5 from the 8 political parties.
- In-depth interviews with civil society organizations.
- Interviews with 27 candidates from different states.

Group Discussion

The team members held FGD with:

- 2.1 Women activists and actors in the civil society organizations.
- 2.2 The media representatives.
- 2.3 Housewives from 2 different areas in Khartoum (Al Mujahideen and Al-Safia), with different socio-economic backgrounds.

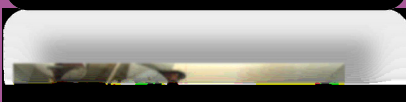
2.4 Youth of the NCP, the Communist party and UMMA party and Al Baath.

2.4.1 Further four group discussions and five individual interviews were conducted with leaders of 3 political parties and candidates from 5 political parties. Actors included women and men activists in civil society, political parties, international organizations and government. The actors educated themselves about quota and built consensus on its importance before starting the advocacy process which proved very influential and successful. The advocacy campaign has resulted in formation of coalitions

- Alliances among actors of divergent political ideologies and experiences.
- Alliances between women in civil society and men elites; coalition among women of ruling and opposition political parties;
- Alliance linking women of civil society and international organizations.

3. A workshop as a further method for data collection:

A workshop was organized for 40 participants, representing mainly political parties and NGOs, media and official. The workshop was a good opportunity for brainstorming, discussion exchange of ideas on different experiences of the diverse individual and institution that played major roles regarding the implementation of the quota system in Sudan and reflection on the outcome after two year from the election on that process.





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Sudan
veloping a
conceptual framework for the research.

5. Review of what has been written in Sudanese Press during the quota / electoral law campaign and election campaign:

We have reviewed the literature, covering issues of the general process that produced the quota; discourses used in its justification; the impact of the quota in women movement, the parliamentarian, the political parties' structure and the international dimension of the quota.

Data Analysis:

The analysis of data collected showed that: there are various and conflicting reasons for adopting the quota to increase representation and political engagement of women but experience showed also that some political parties have political goals such as consolidating power over party representatives and political rivals. The preliminary data analysis of the FGDs also indicated that some political parties have adopted a quota system in their internal institutions but some recognize and ensure participation of women without specifying quota. The profile of candidates showed presence of young women, unmarried, with high education, some with very short history of political engagement, some with no history of family engagement in politics.

The Quota process and achievements in points:

Contextual issues that impacted on the quota and those that threatened it:

1. Relative long and early history of women role in public life in Sudan since 1949.
2. Relative long and early history of women gaining rights for voting and standing for election a process since 1956-1964.
3. The conflict and civil war in which women were engaged in its call for peace (SWEP) that made women visible and effective
4. The CPA framework and the post conflict environment and intervention have helped the women engagements and achievements of the quota.
5. The national constitution including articles of affirmative action, South Sudan constitution including a quota of 25% at least and women effective participation in the constitution making, made them untied, visible and empowered.
6. The international community supported women activism and helped during the process.
7. The experiences of other countries acted as a model.
8. The past experience of some type of quota in Sudanese previous parliaments.
9. The process itself forced reluctant supporter to join in , and engaged women in parties to be forceful to demand the acceptance of the quota by their parties.
10. The presence of some political leaders and men allies as supporters to the quota.
11. All these factors during a post conflict, democratization process influenced the achievements of the quota.



Impact:

1. Wider engagement of women in politics, and public life, especially young women.
2. The first elections in which the quota has been used may have resulted in the wide women participation and engagements of the parliament at all levels have the minimum 25% women. These who were candidates exceeded (2887) and some ran for governor seat and president for the first time.

Challenges:

1. The implication of the secession of the south on the future of the process, and whether it will lead to setback.
2. Whether the proposed formula for constitution building will fairly represent women, and whether the constitution cements such gains and include the quota as a women constitutional right.
3. The recent movements and the use of ICT made the focus on youth the greater; this can be window of a opportunity for women to use to reach to a wider public and for mobilization.
4. The first election resulted in large number of women in the national assembly, 112 women, mostly from NCP and SPLM; but after secession it became almost exclusively NCP with 2% from other two parties.
5. That impacted in women solidarity and relation with parliamentarians.
6. It is ...whether the quota led only to the increases of women in the parliament with present and party or lead to women gains.
7. It needs to be tested whatever the accepted the quota as a genuine principle for women empowerment, gender equality and for transformation or as a lip service to please women to and gain women's political support.



The quota campaign: the achievements:

The quota campaign had important achievements that need to be highlighted: These include the different discourses on women political participation, gender justice and equality; the inclusion of the gender quota in electoral law 2008; and coalition/networking experiences as well as consensus on a common agenda for women was achieved.

Discourses on gender –equality:

Different discourses on women political participation and quota impacts were not only diverse but included challenge to the traditional gender understanding and stereotypes. These discourses were a mould of feminists, Islamic and international perspective that were used strategically by Advocacy Committee and thus found no resistance from most conservative decision-makers reached. Putting these perspectives together helped in building trust and bridging the differences among the diverse Islamist and secular activists/groups.

Gender quota in Election Law, 2008: The Election Law enacted in 2008, had an article stipulating that Compared to the previous law this is considered as success as it ensured the increase in number of women in parliament with a percentage that exceeded their number in any previous parliament.

Coalition of Diverse Categories:

One important outcome was the experience of women working together bridging the diversity of their political differences and variations in their standpoints related to gender equality. The quota campaign led to more networking among the women of civil society and in political parties joint capacity building and debates related to the quota and that reduced the tension which used to be between them based on whose responsibility is advocacy and capacity building in the political space.

Generally it can be said that the culture of solidarity was maintained by many groups as indicated in the participation in the consultations for the new post-referendum constitution. Although the Islamist women soon after election went out of alliances and supported their party's decision, yet many of them maintained their

linkages and cooperation with other political parties and CSOs.

Concern among political parties for political engagement of women:

To fulfil the 25% the political parties have been active in advocacy for quota and some exerted efforts to attract women candidates to compete for seats in the Legislative Assembly. Some political parties had come together to compile joint lists. 37 lists were formed from alliances of five political parties.. The alliances between civil society and political parties had opened space for political parties to recruit women from civil society and from faith based organizations and traditional leaders' families in their list so as to gain voters. This led to the new involvement of females of these categories in direct politics. Manal Wadei explained that 'The campaign for the quota has enabled reaching the Coptic women and community with information on quota and urging them to get engaged in politics'. This is to be considered important as the Coptic remained a neglected minority in most women initiatives and mobilization. Amna Dirar confirms the positive impact on women political participation. 'The quota encouraged the political parties in Eastern Sudan to consider electing women although political participation of women in this region is almost lacking'

The Women Common Agenda was debated and discussed among feminists and non –feminists actors and a declaration was issued in 2007 and again in a conference in 2010 just before the election , which emphasized the importance of legal reform, establishment and sustainability of peace and justice, commitment to fulfilment of MDGs; enhancement of women public participation and development of basic institutional framework for women empowerment and gender equality.

Tremendous increase in women aspirants as well as candidates:

The candidates number reached 20 selected from larger number of aspirants. The impact of the quota would be best realized if we note that those elected in

geographical constituencies were only 53 and in previous elections the women candidates have not reached 20. The impact is not only in number but the transformation that happened to many of these women candidates, their families and communities as they have to overcome profound cultural and social barriers as well as economic constraints.

The visibility of political engagement of young women and men:

Some young men and women participated in discussion and debates on quota, capacity building of political parties and were involved in quota campaign. There were as well some very young women candidates, two of candidates interviewed were recent university graduates.

Media involvement:

The media received some capacity building to engage in the campaign and was involved in awareness raising¹ though their role was rather limited compared to other civil society groups. The journalists had a more active role than television and broadcasts, as some journalists did great efforts in writing educative articles and conducting debates on gender quota as noted above.

Effective support of the international community:

During their involvement in peace negotiations and implementation of CPA, the international community continued to emphasize the gender equality and the importance of improved representation of women. The international community gave support for

- i) The capacity- building initiative for women politicians and the establishment of Women in Political Parties Forum one of the actors in quota adoption process;
- ii) The drafting of the Election Law by the Peace Institute, University of Khartoum
- iii) The advocacy process for quota;

VI) A project for capacity building of men and women in political parties which also emphasized the women participation and representation;

V) Participation of men and women in regional and international dialogue on women political participation and quota issues.

Change in Local Governance Law to include a gender quota:

After the election some parliamentarians in Khartoum State Legislative Assembly found that the local governance law has not mentioned quota and they advocated and lobbied and the law was amended to include a gender quota of 25%.

Challenges:

The Election Law has stipulated a *separate list for women for political parties*. This was refused by the leaders of the campaign, who were advocating for proportional representation with mixed list of women and men. Afaf Abdel Rahman, noted ‘the political parties’ quota deprived independent women opportunity to be elected’. The separate women list would continue the marginalization and jeopardize opportunities for gender mainstreaming in political parties. According to Mawahib Mohamed², ‘the Quota got substantial number of women to legislative assembly but failed to maintain diversity of women politicians that have capacities and needed loud voice to represent rights of women’ ‘The closed list does help selecting among women as the list is taken on total In addition it constraints multi-party and multi-ethnic representation’ (Kuku, 2009)

The law as stipulated ensured only numerical change in representation neglected the aim of the majority of women for proportional representation that would have ensured mainstreaming of women in party lists rather than having a separate party list of women.

The quota advocacy and capacity building was undertaken mainly in the Khartoum State. But very limited efforts reached the other states. Even, when some awareness-raising or capacity building was undertaken at the state level, it was dominated by the urban elites of the states and rarely reached the rural communities.

Although most actors interviewed confirmed that there were no main resistance, the form of the quota approved clearly indicate the resistance of ruling party to empowerment of women and its ‘empty gestures’ motives. .

There had been profound dependence on the support of the international community for the capacity building and campaigning and thus the political parties had not owned the process of capacity-building to be able to evaluate and replicate it.

The laws restrictive to women and freedoms continued such as public order, security and media laws were not reformed.

For most political parties the candidate selection process was undertaken without efforts for gender mainstreaming to ensure that the criteria for eligibility were gender sensitive.

The 30% quota demanded by women found no support despite women visible roles and the 25% was taken as a ceiling and not a minimum. This is a challenge as it indicates that decision-makers and political parties are not yet ready to open up the political space for women.

Quota: Transformation within Political Parties:

The research considered the impact of quota on policies, structures and operations of the political parties.

These issues were highlighted as the quota system has been purposively introduced to remedy structural inequalities in terms of general and specific women's effective participation in all institutions of governance in the country. Political parties are the socio-political and cultural conduits and passages, through which, women can benefit more from this quota system. It is therefore necessary that, the positions and roles of women in various political parties' structures are investigated, to see whether these positions and roles that women occupy and play can in fact achieve the intended positive results within the remit of the quota regime of the 2008 Electoral Law.

The data for this section depended on both qualitative and quantitative methods including a questionnaire with seventeen (17) open-ended questions and group discussions with political parties' women members.³⁰ women from ten political parties selected for the research participated in providing information discussed in this section.

From a general overview of election processes it could be argued that, there have been general positive reaction to the implementation of women quota albeit that, the novelty of the regime produced structural challenges in political parties.

Increase in political engagement of women within political parties:

One main impact is the increase in women political engagement as evidenced by tremendous increase in the number of women candidates. Each political party had a list of women candidates in every state. Some parties created an alliance to be able to have a list. This indicates that quota introduced new dynamics within political parties

particularly among the parties with limited membership of women.

Women in party's leadership positions:

75% of the participants in this portion of the research maintain that, the introduction of the quota regime did not practically and quantitatively increase the number of women in leadership positions, within political parties' structures. The other 25% are not sure of the difference between pre; and post 2008 electoral Laws, and the quota regime. The reasons for such low rate of promotion are structural. Most political parties are also socio-cultural patriarchal institutions which are unlikely to change leadership structure in response to a law. However, conceptually, there is general agreement that more women ought to join leadership positions in various political parties.

Obstacles women face in decision-making positions:

15% of the respondents think that, there are no obstacles operating against women in their political parties if these women want to aspire and reach higher leadership positions in their political parties. 10% of the respondents think that, lack of knowledge, experiences, and other skills prevent women from reaching these higher leadership positions in their political parties. The remaining 75% of the respondents said that, patriarchy, and other structural issues in society are to blame, as well as the negative role of the State, which does not want to change all negative and discriminatory laws in the country, and which work against women in general, as well as women in political parties.

Policies for the operationlization of women's role in the party:

On whether the 2008 Electoral Law, and the Quota regime, induced political parties to become proactive in terms of operationlization of women's roles via parties' policies 75% of the respondents said that, their political parties have become conscious of the need for effective women's participation in various parties' structures, and that, policies are being formulated for that purpose. However, the remaining 25% of the respondents did not expressly say that there are such policies in place, but rather, there are possibilities and enthusiasm for such policies to be effected in their political parties.

Changes in the party's structures:

75% of the respondents admitted that, the quota regime has induced some structural changes within their political parties, especially concerning the position of women in these political parties. There is much intellectual commotion which has created intensive speculations and various conceptual and practical scenarios as regards the role of women in political parties. Whereas, the other 25% of the respondents in this portion of the research said that, they could not see any tangible changes within their political parties' structures consequential upon the introduction of the quota regime.

Articulate women's issues:

What are the changes that occurred and why? 50% of the respondents indicated that, the advent of the quota regime created a narrative transformation in which, women issues were presented in a more urgent and pivotal nature; compared with the period before the advent of the quota regime. That is, there is some kind of qualitative change that has taken place at the discourse level. The reason may be due to general socio-political transformation that took place in the country. However, the other 50% of the respondents did not see any change in the fashion in which, women issues were articulated, and interrogated within their political parties' structures, after the advent of the quota system or regime.

Training of women in political parties:

As to whether the 2008 Electoral Law and the Quota regime led to more training of women in general, and women candidates in particular, within political parties, the analyses of the data set reveals that, 80% of the respondents indicate that, no effective training of women in general and women candidates in particular has taken place within their political parties' structures. 18% of the respondents said that, there is general regular training for all members, not just for women. 2% of the respondents maintained that, there was specific training for all women including candidates. However, there appear to be deficit of purposive human resource development policies in the majority of

political parties; designed specifically for women candidates.

The Preparation and Choice of Candidates for Quotas Lists

Decision-making for Candidates selection:

40% of the respondents did not know who were the decision-makers in the formulation of the women's quota list in their political parties. 25% of the respondents said that; women leaders within their political parties made the decision because they know all the capabilities of the women their parties. The remaining 35% maintained that, the highest authority in their political parties made the decisions because they know better.

The methodology for selection of female candidates:

40% of the respondents did not know how the quota list was prepared in their political parties. 20% of the respondents said that, the leadership of their political parties made the decision. The remaining 40% maintained that, the highest authority in their political parties made the decisions because they know better. The quota list was prepared in their political parties' structures, after the advent of the quota system or regime.



Role of women in the preparation of the quota list

75% of the respondents did not know the role played by women in their political parties in the preparation of the women's quota list. 25% of the respondents said that, women leaders in their political parties influenced the decision of the highest authority in their political parties.

Confrontation during the preparation of the candidates' list:

70% of the respondents said that, there were no confrontations during the preparation of the women's quota list in their political parties, because the women in their political parties are

harmonious. Meanwhile, the other 30% of the respondents maintained that, there were confrontations during the preparation of the women's quota list in their political parties between women themselves; and between their males' supporters. Reasons for these confrontations include personal and group political and cultural differences, and issues of meritocracy.



Quota candidates

From interviews and group discussion with quota women candidates there is evidence that the quota had impact on the candidates' selection process, number of candidates, their profile and experiences.

Candidate's selection process:

The information from candidates confirmed that variation and changes in candidates' selection process for some of parties. Some put general criteria for eligible candidates and used it for selection of both men and women; while some parties added performance and effectiveness within the party, the relationship with and recognition of the constitutions and leadership roles within the party, skills of communication and dialogue and political competence. Some parties emphasised representation of the diversity of age, ethnicity and geographical regions. The separate list of quota encouraged political parties such the Democratic Union Party to add gender related criteria for selection of women candidates such as commitment to women issues and women rights and experiences of participation in decision - making with the party. Other political parties, such as the National Umma Party, widened conceptualization of political activism and effectiveness to include participation in public voluntary activities, commitments to democratic principles and freedoms.

The political parties differed in the electorate and selection process. For some parties the electorates are members of the party election committee; but with quota some formed a women's committee to act as electorate. The selection was mostly a process, each local sector identified two candidates (as case of National Congress Party) and all the candidates were put in a list to be presented to the party higher authority for final selection process. For many parties the selection at local level was done based on criteria identified by women sector at different levels as the case of Democratic Union Party and the Sudan People Liberation Movement. Then the higher party committee refine the selection. In all cases where women

sectors prepared the preliminary list, the higher committee delete or add some names, as for them the representation of the party base remained the most important criteria that guarantee greater opportunity for winning. Some candidates added had no history of political engagement but were women from influential groups/tribes and strong constituencies of the party.

Profile of the candidates:

It was not possible to present a profile for quota candidates and compare them with male candidates as political parties do not have data base. However from the candidates interviewed and limited documents available we can have a highlight on the profile of the candidates.

1. The majority of candidates were in the quota group 35-45 years; but there are younger ones in the 20s. Thus the age demonstrate impact of quota as no party would take risk to nominate a young lady in any geographical constituency. Despite the growing interest and noticeable participation of youth in political parties, still the political awareness at the local level sets its limitations.
2. The education of most candidates was university and post –university. This is expected regarding profound increase in the number of women in higher education. However, the candidates emphasized that there are women with low level of education in some of the lists. These are mostly women selected to represent an influential constituency. The education level demonstrated slight differences compared to women candidates in previous election during of 1968 and 1886 as the latter included candidates with secondary school education.
3. Most of the candidates were employees in the civil service; some were independent traders and lawyers. Some women had experience in voluntary work. This is because this is because when the political parties were sterilized in 1989, some of them formed voluntary organization and some women politicians became active in civil society organization.
4. A number of candidates have been actives in politics for a long time, some since secondary school, the young ones have short history many start their political engagement in the university .some candidates have had no previous experience and started their political career as candidates have experience in public work in civil society organizations.

Impact of Quota: Compared to 1968 and 1986 election the impacts of the quota include:

- Profound increase in the number of candidates from 10 in 1986 to 2887 in 2010.
- Separate list were formed for women for each political party or for alliance of several parties while there were two or three women in mixed lists in previous elections..
- The list included women with limited political experiences and thus in their political competence while previous parliamentarians had history in their parties. .
- Prominence of young women in the list; while the opportunities for young women candidacy were nil.
- The quota lists included candidates from different states and some from different political parties and this are new experiences.
- The importance of order in the list generated competition/confrontation among women for top positions in the list.
- Engagement of international community in quota mobilization helped in availing resources for capacity building for candidates; thus some candidates were trained on election process, campaigns and programs; others on skills for political dialogue and gender mainstreaming within political parties.
- The candidates who participated in the quota campaign interacted with activists from civil society organizations and were involved in dialogue on women common agenda, Millennium Development Goals democracy and human rights; such an opportunity was not accessible previously.

How are the achievements and challenges influenced by wider political, economic, social and cultural context?

The factors that enhanced the achievements related to the quota are interrelated and interlinked and are a result of historical contextual dynamics and post-conflict environment. The respondents interviewed noted the achievements of the quota as influenced by many factors including awareness of activists, their agency, organized advocacy and political parties support and their recognition of importance of women as voters, involvement and support of some male activists, pressure and support of the international community. One important factor was that the ruling party was very careful to present a progressive image of Islam and thus would not resist quota which was approved by partners, SPLM in the South Sudan Constitution and it is an international measure used by many countries to a countries performance to enhance women political participation.

The challenges were due to several contextual factors. According to one academe, 'one of the constraints to the quota is the presence of an adamant totalitarian rule'. The ruling party continued to dominate all state resources and used them for its campaign while giving no support to other political parties and resisted changing restrictive laws. Accordingly to some political parties the environment was not conducive for a fair election and thus they boycotted the election.

The challenges were also influenced by the rift between elite women who led the quota campaign and the citizens in general and thus the quota campaign has not reached the neigh bourhood in urban areas and excluded rural women. That was apparent in demonstration in front of National Legislative Assembly organized by women activists and politicians to influence for mixed list. In fact the demonstration also showed the weak support of males of the political parties despite commitment of leaders to the mixed list.

The women in the ruling party have not kept momentum of solidarity and supported their party against the demands of women because the allegiance is for political party more than women question and because the ruling party as many other parties remained patriarchal.



Lessons Learned:

- Women campaigns for quota can only be effective in a democratic environment.
- For the quota to be effective women politicians must challenge the patriarchy in political parties.
- Capacity building for women in political parties is important in the context with prevalence of political illiteracy and male dominant culture.
- Capacity building for women in political parties is important to ensure adequate supply of women for implementation of the quota
- Excluding grass-root women from quota campaign and raising- awareness is likely to constrain effectiveness of quota.
- Women in political parties need to build rapport and trust with some constituencies to be able to compete
- Alliances and coalition formed during the quota campaigns should keep momentum for gender equality and justice goals.
- Women in political parties would not be empowered for effective representation unless they are able to balance their allegiance to the party and to commitment to gender justice.

Future Vision for Quota:

Quota system in constitution:

30% of the respondents do want the quota system to be expressly included in the constitution due to the fact that, the political system in the country shall not allow for the beneficial use of this article in the constitution. Whereas, the remaining 70% of the respondents expressly want the quota system to become a permanent article in the constitution to give it a sovereign legitimacy which shall compel all political parties to abide by this constitutional provision. It shall make compulsory for all governmental institutions in the country to have quotas for women and that is good for equality in society.

Quota in future election Law:

30% of the respondents do not want the replication of the quota regime in the next Electoral Law if any; due to the fact that,

all of them are not interested in women as numbers; but in their quality. Whereas, 70% of the remaining respondents want the replication of the quota system in the next electoral law because; they believe that, it is necessary so that women are represented in all institutions in the country, and for general women empowerment, as a group, and as individuals.

Challenges for political parties:

- The societal patriarchal mindset is negatively influencing political parties' leaders and gatekeepers as regards their conscious and subconscious exclusion of political women, from pivotal leadership positions within political parties' structures.
- The lack of human resource capacities, skills, knowledge, and experiences as regards women in political parties are practical obstacles to their advancement within political parties' structures as well as women's selection for candidacy.
- Issues of ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, and socio-cultural heterogeneities are among insurmountable challenges to women, and thus exacerbate issues of political polarization among women, within political parties' structures and undermining their solidarity.
- Special programmatic intervention should target youth women leaders in political parties, civil society organizations and various platforms of women organizations.
- Women leaders need to engage in networking and negotiations with political, social, trade union and other civil society sections to form a broad-based coalition of forces that places women agenda at the centre of political parties programmes and positions.



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...the Regional Institute of Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights (RIGDPR) at Ahfad University for Women offers you the chance to join any of its four Master programmes of proven success:

Gender and Development (GAD)

Gender and Peace Studies (GAPS)

Gender and Governance (GAG)

Gender, Migration and Multicultural Studies (GMMS)

Deadlines for Registration

2nd Intake of Applications: April 2013

3rd Intake of Applications: July 2013

There will be two callings for the English Test

Admission Requirements

1. A **very good 1st Degree** in relevant areas
2. A **good 1st Degree and sufficient work experience** in relevant areas
3. **Excellent** command of written and spoken English.

For more information about RIGDPR please go to:

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RIGDPR Newsletter N.4

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